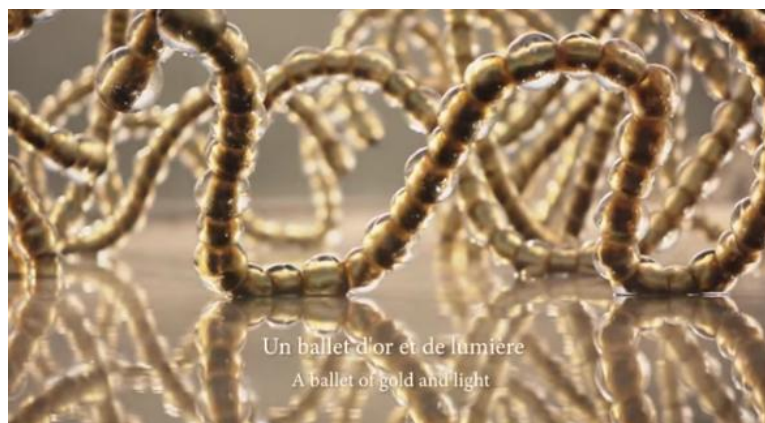


Lil Buck at Versailles, as Apollo. Seriously.

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The Parisian artist Jean-Michel Othoniel's gilded glass fountains won't be the only things dancing at opening parties for the restored Water Theater grove in the gardens of the Château de Versailles in May. L.A. Dance Project will present the latest addition to its repertoire in the newly landscaped space on May 10 and 11, with a guest solo performance by the jookin street dance phenomenon Lil Buck, starring as the sun god Apollo.

Conceived by the company's founder, Benjamin Millepied, now dance director at the Paris Opera Ballet, the 10-minute divertissement, "O'de," takes its inspiration from 17th-century dances created

and performed by King Louis XIV in the original Water Theater. Louis himself used to dance the role of Apollo in his own baroque projection of soft power, wearing a golden mask that gave him his nickname, the Sun King.

Mr. Othoniel, whose sinuously beaded fountains are derived from a contemporary record of the royal dance routine that he found in Boston's Public Library, has designed costumes and jewelry for the performance — a departure for him.

"The fountains will be turned on as the dance comes to its final climax," he said in a telephone interview. "It will be spectacular." The performance will play to invited audiences of 500 guests, and a video will be made for public viewing.

Mr. Othoniel and the landscape designer Louis Benech teamed in 2011 to bid in an international competition for the re-creation of the long-lost outdoor stage, set amid fountains and trees, that formed a key part of the Versailles garden first laid out by André Le Nôtre. Their winning design set three fountains, built in Mr. Othoniel's hallmark glass beadwork, in a cluster of reflecting pools. It is the first new permanent sculpture in the Versailles park in 300 years.

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